

Sprint, Connect with Kids and Harvard undertake a landmark study to assess the impact that corporate social responsibility has on the positive development of children

Fairfax, VA, August 1, 2006 . . . The Harvard Center on Media and Child Health (CMCH) is partnering with Connect with Kids and the Sprint Corporation to evaluate for the first time ever: *When responsible corporate citizens provide funding to media and schools, they can affect positive change in the behaviors and attitudes of young people.* The study is using Connect with Kids programming, the leading provider of television, web and educational content about today's youth issues, and a conduit for socially responsible corporations who want to support effective programs for parents and kids.

The ultimate goal of the research study, which also includes WUSA-TV and DC-metropolitan area public and charter schools, is to demonstrate that *corporations* can play a significant role in facilitating the social and emotional health of children, thereby positively impacting communities.

A growing trend among corporations is a commitment to not only deliver quality goods and services, but to give back to communities through socially responsible activities. The Sprint/Connect with Kids/Harvard study coincides with a recent annual ranking of the world's best corporate reputations, which demonstrated that consumers are influenced by a company's community responsibility and philanthropy. According to the *Wall Street Journal-Online*, Sprint was ranked among the top 60 in the country.

Sprint has a long-standing commitment to children and education, and during the past two years the company has spearheaded a critically acclaimed educational initiative in five Kansas City school districts including 48 schools and 800 students. The initiative included Sprint's donation of the award-winning *Connect with Kids* multimedia curriculum in the classroom, sponsorship of correlated, youth-focused *Connect with Kids* television programming on KMBC-TV, and funding of an independent research study. All of the Connect with Kids classroom and television programs feature real children sharing their true stories about the issues youth face everyday, with an emphasis on improving the health and social and life skills of children and teens.

The results reported by independent research firm, Compass Consulting, show that the *Connect with Kids* programming donated by Sprint improves student behavior in significant ways, including decreases in bullying, fighting, lying and cheating, and increases in respect, tolerance and academic perseverance. Based on this research, *Connect with Kids* has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education's coveted What Works Clearinghouse as an evidence-based program.

It is due to these successful results that Sprint is extending its support of children and education by launching a similar initiative in the DC-area schools during the 2006-2007 school year. As part of the new initiative, Sprint is donating *Connect with Kids'* Character Education videos and classroom materials to DC- area schools, as well as a parent outreach component and a comprehensive website of online materials. Classroom learning will be reinforced through the Emmy^R award-winning *Connect with Kids* half-hour television programs broadcast on WUSA-TV, enabling parents and children to watch and learn together about issues that affect today's kids.

In addition, Sprint, in partnership with CWK Network, is providing funding to the Harvard Center on Media and Child Health (CMCH) to design and perform a rigorous research study that assesses the impact of corporations can have on the positive development of children and teens. The Harvard CMCH is dedicated to understanding and responding to the effects of media on the physical, mental and social health of children through research, production and education. The Center previously researched the impact of the Sesame Street television programming, which concluded that children can learn pro-social behaviors from educational television, and that these behaviors are enhanced when parents are directly involved.

Since its establishment in 1989, the Sprint Foundation has provided more than \$85 million dollars to communities across the country and is committed to programs that support the positive development of youth. The partnership among Sprint, WUSA-TV, Harvard CMCH, and *Connect with Kids* is the first of its kind; Harvard CMCH joined the partnership based on its belief that corporations and local media can play a critically important role in addressing important public health and youth issues.

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The Harvard Center on Media and Child Health at Children's Hospital Boston, Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health is dedicated to understanding and responding to the effects of media on the physical, mental and social health of children through research, production and education. The partnership with *Connect with Kids*, WUSA-TV and the DC public schools represents a landmark research endeavor to understand the effect of public, private and media alliances for the positive development of children and teens.

Founded in 1998, CWK Network produces the Emmy[®] award-winning *Connect with Kids* television series and weekly news stories on the latest kids' topics. The series of 10 half-hour television programs, as well as the five weekly youth news stories, are shown on 65 top stations across the country, reaching 65 percent of U.S. households. Stations include ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox, Cox, and more.

CWK Network has also produced more than 120 multimedia programs used in elementary, middle and high schools across the country. Major U.S. school systems are successfully using *Connect with Kids'* video-based curriculum, including:

- New York City Public Schools
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Newark Public Schools
- Duval County
- Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Houston Independent School District

CWK also develops consumer videos for parents. All of the programs have one focus: improving the lives of children and along the way, helping parents become better parents. For more information about *Connect with Kids* youth-focused educational and television programs, please visit www.connectwithkids.com.